

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 PM-04 NSC-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00
INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 /039 W
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FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0007
INFO AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO
AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BRASILIA 1065

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT PGOV BR
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT GEISEL USE IA-5 TO CASSATE PORTO ALEGRE CITY
COUNCILMAN GLENIO PERES FOR SHARPLY CRITICAL HUMAN RIGHTS SPEECH

1. IN HIS FIFTH APPLICATION OF IA-5 IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS,
AND THE FIRST ON CLEARLY POLITICAL/IDEOLOGICAL GROUNDS SINCE
APRIL 1976, PRESIDENT GEISEL ON FEBUARY 2 CASSATED THE
ELECTORAL MANDATE AND SUSPENDED FOR TEN YEARS THE POLITICAL
RIGHTS OF GLENIO MATHIAS GOMES PERES, AN MDB CITY COUNCILMAN
IN PORTO ALEGRE, WHO TWO DAYS EARLIER HAD EMBARKED ON HIS
THIRD TERM WITH A SPEECH SHARPLY CRITICAL OF THE HUMAN
RIGHTS SITUATION IN BRAZIL.

2. IN THE INAUGURATION SPEECH, PERES REFERRD TO "THE LARGE
GAP I HUMAN RIGHTS, IN THE RIGHTS OF BRAZILIAN CITIZENS,"
AND DECLARED THAT "THIS FORUM SHOULD BE USED TO REPORT THAT
THERE IS AN IMMENSE PRISON WHICH TODAY BLOCKING THE
EXPRESSION OF THOUGHT ON BEHALF OF FREEDOM FOR ALL BRAZILIANS. . .
THAT THERE ARE SCHOLS KNOWN AS ANTITERRORIST SCHOOLS,
SPECIALISTS IN REMOVING HUMAN FINGERNAILS, IN CAUSING
PHYSICAL PAIN, IN MAKING A PERSON PAY WITH HIS
BLOOD, HIS LIFE, FOR HIS THOUGHT AND THE EXERCISE OF
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HIS FREEDOM." "THIS HOUSE SHOULD BE USED FOR THAT
PURPOSE, MR. PRESIDENT, TO ALLOW ME TO STATE THAT
THERE ARE TORTURERS AND TORTURED."

3. MDB REACTION TO THE CASSATION WAS PREDICTABLY CRITICAL,
WITH MANY OPPOSITION MEMBERS ALLEGING SUBTLE POLITICAL
MOTIVES FOR GOVERNMENTS MOVE. SOME MAINTAINED THAT THE

ACION WAS INTENDED TO WARN THE POLITICAL CLASS THAT THE GROWING DISCUSSION OF REFORM SHOULD BE TEMPERED BY RESTRAINT AND A SENSE OF THE LIMITS TO THAT PORCESS, INCLUDING THE INVIOABILITY OF IA-5. OTHERS, INCLUDING PERES HIMSELF, DECALRED THAT IT WAS A TACTICAL MANEUVER TO DEPRIVE THE MDB OF ITS NEWLY ACQUIRED VETO-PROOF MAJORITY ON THE PORTO ALEGRE CITY COUNCIL. (PERES' DEPARTURE CONCELED THAT MARGIN.) ARENA OFFICIALS GENERALLY REFRAINED FROM COMMENT; AFEW OFFERED A LESS-THAN-SPIRITED DEFENSE OF THE CASSATION, ADDING THEIR CONVICTION THAT IT WULD NOT SET BACK EFFORTS TOWARDS POLITICAL REFORM AND BIPARTISAN COOPERATION.

4. COMMENT: PERES' SPEECH AND PAST RECORD AS A SHARP TONGUED HUMAN RIGHTS CRITIC IN THEMSELVES OFFERED SUFFICIENT "GROUNDS" FOR APPLICATION OF IA-5 IN LIGHT OF PAST PRECEDENTS. HOWEVER, THE SUDDENNESS AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE RETALIATION SUGGEST THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS EARGER TO AVAIL ITSELF OF THE OPPORTUNITY PRESENTED BY PERES TO WIPE OUT MDB CONTROL OF THE CITY COUNCIL, AND MAY EVEN HAVE BEEN VIGILANT FOR SUCH A MISSTEP. THE ACT OF CASSATION WAS SUDEN AND SUMMARY, WITH APPARENTLY NO CONSULTATIONS BEFOREHAND WITH SENIOR ARENA STATE AND MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS. COMING AT A TIME OF RENEWED DEMANDS FOR GREATER PARTICIPATION AND RETURN TO THE RULE OF LAW, THE CASSATION WAS A SOBERING REMAINDER OF THE AWESOME ARBITRARY POWERS OF THE CHIEF OF STATE.

5. AIRGRAM FOLLOWS.
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CRIMMINS

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
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Concepts: PERSONNEL CONDUCT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 09-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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